

# MONUMENT TO FREDERIC THE GREAT, OF PRUSSIA.

THIS year has been characterised by the completion of two great monumental works—the Bavaria, at Munich, and the above huge mausoleum at Berlin. In a time when the deeds of persons to be monumented are somewhat inquired into, the erection of a monument to Frederic of Prussia is perfectly warrantable. Besides being a warrior and statesman, he prided himself in “being the chief functionary of the nation;” and to a deputation which came to thank him for some act of royal solicitude, he answered, “I merit no thanks: I have only done my duty.”

It was already during his life time, that the chiefs of his army projected to erect to the king a statue of large size, at their own expense; when the monarch, being made aware of their intention, had them informed that “it was a praiseworthy custom to erect monuments, not during the life, but after the death of persons thus to be honoured.” Still, some of his generals were not prevented, by this declaration, from commemorating the deeds of the great king even then; as, for instance, Count Hoditz, who placed a bust of Frederic II., with a suitable inscription, in his domain, Rossward, in Moravia. Later, the Estates of Pomerania erected a marble statue of the king at Stettin, &c. In the reign of Frederick William II. the subject was again taken up: the actual place of the monument was selected as the site most appropriate, and even plans and other preparations made; but the critical position of Prussia at the beginning of this century, frustrated all similar efforts. Frederic William III. also was imbued with a high sense of duty towards his great ancestor, and the general peace then established, fostered his purposes. But it was the Estates of the Mark Brandenburg and Nether Lusacia, who in 1830 brought the matter to an issue, by memorialising the king on the erection of a monument to Frederic the Great, by contributions raised from the bulk of the nation. The king highly approved of the proposal, but decided on placing the undertaking under his own charge. Thus, States-councillor architect Schinkel and Professor Rauch, the latter of whom was then at Munich, received orders for making plans and estimates for a monument of Frederic the Great. According to these first plans it had to be placed twenty paces from the entrance to the Linden, and consist of a column similar to that of Trajan at Rome, &c. Conjointly, however, with the progress of the plans, weighty objections were elicited. In the following year Schinkel was engaged in the architectural projections of the monument, and Rauch made statuary sketches of the departed hero. At last Rauch became seized with the idea of representing the king on horseback, attired according to his times and fashion, the equestrian statue to be supported by a large pedestal, which would afford sufficient room for the representation of contemporaneous warriors and statesmen, &c. These original and bold ideas are those according to which the monument has been eventually constructed. Frederic William III. suggested some improvements, and thus three models of small size were exhibited in the Berlin art-show of 1839. On the 8th December of the same year, the royal warrant for the execution of the monument was signed, of which, in May following, the foundation stone was laid by the hereditary prince, now Frederic William IV. Already, in 1839, Rauch had commenced the full-size model of the horse, and in February, 1842, horse and rider were completed by him and his assistants, Albert Wolf and Gustav Bläser. When the present king saw the original model of the pedestal, he selected it in preference to that approved of by the late king. The selection of the personages to be represented and inscribed on the monument was a matter of historical delicacy and etiquette, whereon statesmen and learned men were duly consulted, &c. On the 8th of May the colossal clay model of the equestrian statue, measuring 16 feet 3 inches high, was completed by Rauch and his assistants, Bläser, Wolgast, and Genschow, ready for casting. But larger spaces were required for that

operation than had been hitherto at hand in Berlin. Hence, therefore, the former building of the Mint was appropriated thereto, workshops of large size fitted up, and a new casting furnace for bronze built on purpose, for which M. Schüller, privy councillor of architecture, made the plans, which were executed by the inspector Kreye, then employed in the construction of the New Museum. It was on the 11th July, 1846, at midnight, that the casting of this huge piece of bronze was completed by the overseer Friebe. The other works of the pedestal, still of great importance, went on in succession, and at the end of the year 1849 the last portions of the bronze castings were done, and the construction of the mason and granite works begun at the place marked out in 1840. It may be well imagined that at such an undertaking a large staff of artists and artificers were engaged, of which the following may be especially mentioned. Sculptors Haagen, Bräunlich, Afinger, &c.; modellers Bianconi and Mitsching; the bronzemakers Warmuth, Nürenberg, Scheer, &c.; chasers, Kratzberg, Steckner, &c.; carpentering and scaffolding, master-carpenter Pardow and his men, who made and arranged these huge masses with circumspection, accuracy, and great steadiness. This abridged narration will give some idea of the preparations requisite for this fine and huge monument.

Its entire height rises to 43 feet. The granite socle is 5 feet 9 inches; the first course being composed of sixteen stones, the second and third courses of eight stones each. On this rests the bronze pedestal of an aggregate weight of above 367 cwts. The bronze socle contains between the projecting consoles, on the front side, the dedicatory inscription: on the three other sides are inscribed the names of deserving men of the time of Frederic the Great. The inscription (translated) runs thus:—

“TO FREDERIC THE GREAT,  
FREDERIC WILLIAM THE THIRD,  
1840.  
COMPLETED UNDER FREDERIC WILLIAM THE FOURTH,  
1851.”

The crown above, with sceptre and sword, palm and laurel, denote the hero, the king and the poet. The angles of the volutes of the consoles are ornamented, at the larger sides, with sculptures of warriors in various positions. The front side represents the genius of Light with the burning torch, and the genius of Fame with palm and wreath, the former having at his side the owl, the other an eagle, sun-ascending. On the opposite tablet are genii of Peace, supporting rich garlands of flowers and fruit.

Above this bronze socle rises the principal feature of the pedestal—a colossal cube of the same metal, consisting of sculpture, representing the chief military, states, literary, and art notabilities of the Frederician era. It is in this part of the pedestal that Rauch has executed an original idea, viz., of combining figures of alto relievo, nay statues, with the basso relievo on the four faces of the cube. These four equestrian alto relievo being placed at the corners, project and impart great life to the whole of the sculpture. They represent generals Prince of Brunswick, Prince of Prussia, Ziedlitz, and Zieten, the latter especially still living in the memory of the Prussian people. A host of general and staff officers form the remaining part of the *bassi relievi* of this part of the pedestal. Guarded, as it were, by this phalanx, the portion of the sculpture turned towards the Brandenburg triumphal arch contains the figures of the representatives of the intellect of the Frederician era—Count Cormer, the founder of the public law of Prussia; C. H. Graun, a great fosterer of German musical art; Leipsing; and last, but not least, Immanuel Kant, “the stern, conscientious thinker, who, by teaching and authorship, paved the way towards new and serious thought.” Amongst the names of the persons inscribed on the socle are, Ramber, the poet; Gleim, a man whose rhymes still remain in the mouths of the people; Christina Garve,

\* German art-critics have truly observed, that the Monumented merges nearly in the names of the Monumenters.

whose characteristics we also translate verbatim from the official programme: “C. Garve, who, clothing his philosophical inquiries in pleasing forms and plain language, has much contributed towards the spreading of serious thought (!) and general culture of the people.” Then follow Gellert, Maupertius, John Winckelmann, and some others. Above these groups and names tower the genii of Peace and Public Welfare (*Felicitas publica*), and a row of columns behind indicates that the building of the intellectual dome of mankind is never to cease.

The pyramidal (decreasing) shape of the huge postament exhibits *basso relievo* of minor size, relating to the more personal history of the late king. Alike as the angles of the under part are ornamented by projecting equestrian statues, we perceive here four female figures, representing Strength, Justice, Wisdom, and Moderation. Amongst the *basso relievo* is Clio instructing the youth, and pointing to high patterns, worthy of imitation. On the side turned towards the university we perceive the king in the hut of the Silesian weavers, intent on the examination of their work: another sculpture represents the king playing on the flute in lonely retirement: in another, Knobelendorff, the art-adviser of Frederic, presents to him an antique work of bronze. Between these larger *basso relievo*, that of the front exhibits the great man in his reverse circumstances,—Frederic sitting on the famous pump after the lost battle of Kollin, sorrowful but not dejected. On the rear, in fine, the eagle of renown conveys the sage and the ruler, crowned with laurel and palm, to higher abodes, where, even among the constellations of the heavens, his star “*Frederici honor*” is shining.

All this, in fine, is crowned by the colossal equestrian statue, representing the king as he usually rode through the streets of Berlin. The royal mantle has been added by the sculptor, to give the statue, placed at such altitude, more plenitude: this, however, Frederic II. never chose to wear. We may conclude this notice on the great art-work lately completed, with the words of the Common Council of Berlin, on presenting Rauch with the liberties of the city: “You have completed a work which long will serve as a means for the mind-elevation of the people.”

## STATE OF OUR BELFRIES.

HAVING been into a score of belfries, at the request of a member of our (Somersetshire) Archaeological Society, I was surprised and grieved at the positively beastly state of the bell-chamber of every one of them, simply from the luffer-boards never projecting sufficiently outwards to hinder the entrance of wet, and from there being no wire-netting to prevent birds roosting and defiling every inch. The straw and birds' dung being always moist, ferments, and rots even the best oak, so that the repair is a constant source of expense, and a very heavy one. Very many towers have no luffer-boards, but only some stone screen work of late date, or a few ill-fixed slates. Wire to fill the windows of any tower can be procured and fixed for less than a pound; but, like all churchwardens' duties, it cannot be compelled, and will not be done. AN ARCHITECT.

## AID FOR THE ART-ARTISAN SCHOOLS.

AMONGST the numerous memorials presented to the Royal Commissioners of the Exhibition, relative to the disposal of the surplus funds, one is from the Committee for establishing Suburban Art-Artisan Schools, praying for assistance to enable them to carry out their entire scheme of schools in different districts of the metropolis. The success which has attended their present school in Camden-town, where, since 1st May, 1850, 550 men and lads have received art instruction, and where at the present moment, there are above 100 students, undoubtedly gives them a claim for support, as the introducers of the system of artisan instruction in drawing and modelling into this country. Such schools are among the legitimate objects on which the surplus funds of the Great Exhibition should be bestowed.